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THE COLD WAR GROWS WARMER

by William Henry Chamberlin

The cold war with the Soviet Union dominates American foreign policy to the dwarfing or exclusion of every other issue. What we are now spending on armaments alone considerably exceeds the total sum of a normal pre-war budget. No wonder taxes are confiscatory. One of the many opportunities muffed by the Republican high command in the last election campaign is found in the failure to point the cause-and-effect relationship between Roosevelt's policy of appeasement and the present bankrupting necessity of containing Russia.

The Atlantic Pact is the latest and most spectacular move in the cold war. It represents the abandonment of an historic American principle: abstention from alliance with European Powers. And, despite legal casuistry in twisting the text of the Pact into harmony with the wording of the United Nations Charter, there is unmistakable incompatibility between this alliance against Russia and the spirit that was supposed to animate the United Nations.

Undoubtedly Secretary of State Acheson would eliminate Article 54 of the Charter if he could. It is tabu in State Department propaganda. But our pledge still stands to uphold Article 54, which says:

"The Security Council shall at all times be kept fully informed of activities undertaken or in contemplation under regional arrangements or by regional agencies for the maintenance of international peace and security."

Nobody seriously supposes that Comrade Gromyko, as Russia's representative on the Security Council, will be kept "fully informed" of our military preparations under the "regional arrangement" of the Atlantic Alliance. So it would have been more honorable to say frankly that this alliance is an inevitable consequence of the complete frustration of the UN machinery. The root of the evil is not such measures for the consolidation of the West as ERP; the Truman Doctrine; the Atlantic Pact. It is the demonstrated unfitness of a revolutionary dictatorship like Stalin's for membership in any world organization of free nations.

What makes the Soviet Union a peculiarly baffling problem is its unusual combination of a powerful State and a universal doctrine. Russia as a State with conventional nationalist aspirations was manageable, although Stalin is not the first Russian ruler whose designs and ambitions have aroused anxious speculations in Western capitals.

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If Communism were merely a political-economic theory, unconnected with any government, free Societies could accept it, in the general forum of debatable ideas, without undue concern. It is the combination of the strong Soviet State with its vast military establishment, and the Communist idea which recognizes no boundaries in its missionary zeal, that is the root of difficulty.

II

If one examines the basic causes of the cold war, which the United States reluctantly recognized after the Soviet Union had come close to winning it in Western Europe, one finds that they are at once more stubborn and less tangible than familiar nationalist disputes over a slice of territory, or a convenient port, or access to a desired market. One of these fundamental causes is the belief, instilled into the Soviet population ever since the Revolution, that some day there will and must be an Armageddon, a last decisive battle between the Communist and the non-Communist worlds.

There are many texts in the sacred writings of Lenin and Stalin which point to this conclusion. Perhaps the most vivid is Lenin's statement, cited with approval by Stalin in Problems of Leninism:

"It is inconceivable that the Soviet Republic should continue to exist for a long period side by side with imperialist States. Ultimately one or the other must conquer. Meanwhile a number of terrible clashes between the Soviet Republic and the bourgeois States are inevitable."

It is true that Stalin, when directly confronted with the question by a "bourgeois" interviewer, has occasionally expressed a benevolent belief that peaceful co-existence of Communism and capitalism is possible. But the weight of doctrinal authority, as taught in Russia, is all in favor of the fundamentalist theory of inevitable conflict.

A second difficulty in making solid agreements with the men in the Kremlin is their persistent and consistent bad faith -- a common characteristic of fanatics. Perhaps no threat Stalin could have used toward Norway would have been as terrifying as his proffer of a non-aggression pact. The Norwegians recall the fate of those five States along the Soviet western border (Poland, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia) that actually signed non-aggression pacts with Moscow.

The third difficulty is the world-wide Communist fifth column. For this, history shows no real precedent. Millions of Communists inside and outside the Iron Curtain are enrolled in the most gigantic propaganda-infiltration organization which was ever at the disposal of a would-be world conqueror.

III

So much for the fundamental causes of the cold war. Obviously these causes lead to certain unavoidable consequences. If the Soviet rulers are thinking in terms of inevitable conflict, their restrictions on freedom of contact between their subjects and foreigners are not likely to be relaxed. These restrictions now extend to the extreme of forbidding any intermarriage between Russians and foreigners.

If treaties and agreements negotiated with the Soviet Government are worthless, it would be useless, and might be very dangerous, to enter into any form of disarmament convention. In the United States, with its freedom of press and speech, there would be at least some denunciation on any evidence that our government was evading the terms of such an agreement. But there would not be a whisper of comment behind the Iron Curtain if the Soviet Government, after solemnly renouncing the use of atomic weapons, should build a gigantic Oak Ridge with slave labor at some remote fastness in Siberia.

What are the principal concrete issues, as apart from the basic causes, of the cold war? The most explosive and the most directly expensive, at present, is the 10 month old Berlin blockade.

Had it not been for the possibilities of air transport, this action would have placed the Western Powers before the uncomfortable alternative of a new Munich (or Yalta) or the risk of starting a third world war. The amazing development of the air lift has enabled America, Britain and France to stay in Berlin without the use of military force. But the air lift is an extremely expensive and inefficient means of satisfying the needs of some two million people. It would have failed except for the indomitable spirit of the Berlin population, proving that a majority there regards occupation by Western Powers as a lesser evil.

The Berlin blockade results from the failure to reach agreement on a settlement for Germany. Stalin has intimated that it could be lifted if the inauguration of the projected West German State were postponed. But the decision to create this State, under occupation tutelage, was only taken after all attempts to reach an agreement about Germany as a whole had failed.

The Soviet Union and the Western Powers are also in disagreement about the terms of the Austrian peace treaty. Another hot issue in the cold war is the aid which the Greek Communist guerrillas have received from Soviet satellite and ex-satellite States, Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. The Soviet Union has repeatedly disputed and flouted the decisions of a UN committee of investigation on this question. There

has been similar defiance of UN in connection with the situation in Korea, where a Soviet puppet regime was set up in the part of the country which lies north of the 38th parallel of latitude. And there has been no progress to report on a peace treaty with Japan, or on a UN police force, or on a mutually acceptable agreement for atomic control.

IV

A mere listing of the root causes of the cold war and the issues which have grown out of it indicates the extreme improbability that a meeting between Stalin and Truman would banish disagreements and difficulties. It is premature for either side to claim victory or admit defeat. The disintegration of the nationalist regime in China is of course a tremendous victory for international Communism, making a mockery of America's sacrifices in the Far Eastern war.

On the other hand, there has been an unmistakable improvement in conditions in Western Europe during the last year. The likelihood of Communist revolution has correspondingly diminished. Germans and Austrians have more to hope for from the West than from the East. And the disaffection of Tito is not the only evidence that the formula of ruling a multi-national Soviet empire by local fifth columns can backfire.

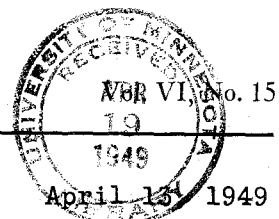
Soviet reaction to the Atlantic Pact will probably be an intensified war of nerves, not a resort to arms. Stalin has never started a war in which the odds were not about fifty to one in his favor. He knows that he can expect no such odds in a conflict with the United States. Moreover, the Soviet leaders are convinced that the American economy is overstrained, that a depression is coming and that seeds of internal decay are sprouting.

The United States should supplement the signing of the Atlantic Pact with a clear statement of the terms on which we would be prepared to sign a peace, or a truce, in the cold war. Lifting of the Berlin blockade, conclusion of a treaty with Austria, withdrawal of Russian troops from Hungary and Rumania, would be minimum conditions. We should also be more forthright in advocating a united Germany, with evacuation of all occupation forces, and an end to the milking of German industry for either Russian, British or French benefit.

Then, if the Soviet Government refused these terms, the case for a viable self-supporting West Germany, as an equal partner and not as an exploited colony in the West European setup, would be incontestable.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to Human Events*



By Frank C. Hanighen

THE BRANNAN PLAN: Admiration was mixed with awe in Washington when Secretary of Agriculture Brannan unveiled his "Christmas tree", with its "present for everyone". The symmetry of the scheme is politically perfect: low food prices for the consumers, high incomes for the farmers (who ensured the Truman victory last fall) by subsidies -- a veritable cure-all. The trouble, however, is that the sheen from the tree is a bit too lustrous; the presents too generous. Even Senator Aiken of Vermont, often termed an "agrarian radical", had to point out that, if one class gets a guaranteed high income from the Government, other classes will demand similar benefits. Finally, there was an ominous reserve among farm groups: they do not like the string -- crop controls -- attached to the handsome gifts.

Nor did it go unnoticed that this Utopian plan would involve the unpleasant problem of taxes. How much would all this cost? Mr. Brannan, in the fine tradition of Utopia-makers, became delightfully vague about that matter. Brannan's indefiniteness on this point did not win converts in a Congress which is daily growing very tax-conscious. With ECA, Atlantic Alliance lend-lease, a big defense budget, the perennial pork barrel, etc., Congress has become mighty concerned about the stark facts of the fiscal situation. And there are signs that New Deal legislators, after sixteen years, have reached puberty and understand that the presents from old St. Nick's sack have to be paid for out of taxes.

This development comes at a time when the British Socialist Government is painfully grappling with the facts of its economic life. Sir Stafford Cripps produced a budget last week that maintained high taxes and raised food prices. He said, in his most caustic way, that "we can't have our cake and eat it too". Or, you cannot get a quart from a pint pot. The London Economist recently remarked that the British people "have been taught that money does not matter . . . They have allowed the Government to spend one-third of their income on their behalf; but they still expect to be able to spend the whole of it themselves. . . . They abominate the Purchase Tax because it drives up prices; but the subsidies (which are Purchase Taxes in reverse) they will fight for as a matter of social right. They are willing to go without . . . so that a bigger share of output can be exported or invested in new capital; but they invade the consulting rooms for new spectacles and dentures." It can't go on, insisted Sir Stafford, and the next day voters discontented with his words went to the polls to give the Conservative Party its first real victory in four years, in the County elections. As a reward for his brave words Sir Stafford may be thrown to the wolves by colleagues who have pondered the election results. However, elections or no elections, those colleagues too must face the inexorable facts. And so must their counterparts in Washington.

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HOOVER: In this atmosphere of budgetary concern, Mr. Hoover's testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee was literally explosive. Some of the story he told of Defense extravagance had received notice in this column during the period of the 80th Congress. It has been forgotten that Senator Bridges and Congressman Taber fought sturdily to prevent wasteful expenditures by this as well as other departments. Over a year ago, Not Merely Gossip reported that, under orders from the White House, Defense officials effectively blocked the work of Messrs. Bridges and Taber by withholding co-operation from Congress. Mr. Hoover, the other day, was characteristically kind and tactful, but the press should have fixed the responsibility for this state of affairs on its real locus, the White House.

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Mr. Hoover, however, did succeed in underlining in fiery figures the savings which could be made in Defense. He said that economies running to perhaps \$1.5 billion could be made, "attaining the same ends for less expenditure". Thus, the former President was able to emphasize for the benefit of Congress and the people the potential economies involved in the voluminous reports of his Commission. It must be recognized that the Commission included a number of individuals whose philosophy is that of spending, not economy; and due to these influences the Commission Reports do not offer estimates of budgetary reduction which could be achieved. It is a little known fact that efficiency experts consulting with the Hoover Commission have privately estimated that about \$4 billion of savings could be made by the enforcement of the Commission's recommendations. Mr. Hoover's "publicity spot" this week has given inspiration to members of the Appropriations Committee. He should be called back -- again and again and again.

Another point emerges from Hoover's testimony. The makings of a scandal, comparable to that of Pearl Harbor, lie in the following dry words about "what became of the vast quantities of our material on hand at the end of hostilities. The Army has stated that it has material sufficient to equip only 18 divisions, although at the end of the war it had some 89 fully equipped divisions and great additional quantities of material in the pipe line. Disposition of easily replaceable material is readily understood; but loss of complicated, difficult-to-replace military equipment is another matter, especially as the military were put on notice six months after the end of the war as to the seriousness of the international situation." Here indeed are some rattling bones in the ample closet space of the Pentagon. But, like Pearl Harbor, there will be strong efforts to conceal the truth.

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TOWN TALK: The Brannan proposal is only a stalking horse, say farm experts. When its novelty has worn off, the Administration will back a "90 per cent of parity" crop support program. This strategy, it is claimed, will split the Republican-Southern Democrat coalition, for the Southern agricultural groups are strong for "90 per cent of parity".

State Department sources privately say that the problem of providing arms for Spain will be solved by arming Portugal. The Lisbon Government is a signatory of the North Atlantic Pact, and at the same time has an alliance with Madrid. The Portuguese are the least martial of warriors, and will gladly transfer North Atlantic arms to the brother Iberian Power. The State Department is disposed to wink at this projected arrangement.

The subject which has absorbed Capital conversation during the past week has been neither Spain, nor Hoover, nor Brannan. It is the nervous breakdown of the unfortunate Mr. Forrestal, late Secretary of Defense. The four local newspapers shunned the topic; then a sensational radio commentator broadcast some of the lurid reported details, excusing himself on the ground that Forrestal had allegedly been a very sick man while still Secretary of Defense. Then a pressmen's strike shut down all the Washington newspapers. The result has been a morbid talk-fest in this town; and the Moscow radio has taken it up. The phenomenon is interesting as an example of what takes place when news about public officials is bottled up.

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INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS: In Hard Times, there was Mrs. Gradgrind advising the kids to go and be "something-o-logical directly". Today, there is the State Department ready at the drop of a hat to back anything that is against sin. For instance, last fall the UN General Assembly in Paris, in the closing hours, passed a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As it came up, Mr. Frank E. Holman, President of the

American Bar Association, wishing the American people to be informed of exactly what was being approved in their behalf, tried to look into the matter. He was advised that not even the State Department had a final copy of the Declaration, the latter portion of which -- remarks Mr. Holman -- "sets up a collectivist concept of government for all the people of the world, including ourselves". The inquisitive Mr. Holman was fobbed off by Secretary Marshall with the assurance that the document was merely a declaration of moral principles and had no force behind it.

But now, it appears, the State Department plans to present the Declaration as a treaty, to be ratified by the Senate, and to be implemented through International Courts. Mr. Holman, addressing the District of Columbia Bar Association, said that "not only individuals (both private citizens and public officials) but also cities, counties and states in the country may be complained against not only by individuals and pressure groups in the United States but by individuals and pressure groups in Russia or any other country, and thus brought before an international tribunal and tried and punished. It is conceivable that Mr. Vishinsky or Mr. Molotov might be a complainant against the officials of my own State of Washington and even its Courts for having recently sustained the dismissal of three alleged Communist professors from the University of Washington." Indeed, something-o-logical!

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GUATEMALA: We have noticed, reading a review of foreign radio broadcasts, an interesting development in Latin America. Formerly, commentators in that area devoted generous time to belaboring Yanqui imperialism. Today, while that congenial exercise is not altogether abandoned, it yields first place to a squalling vituperative strain of inter-American criticism. The Dominican Republic assails Guatemala or Venezuela, and vice versa; and other feuds break out among other republics. The precise reason for this isn't clear, but there is evidence that it is Moscow that has tossed the apple of discord among our Latin American neighbors.

A report which we have just received from an exceptionally intelligent observer certainly points the finger at the Muscovites. This gentleman has just returned from a visit to Guatemala with the following picture. The Guatemalan Government is composed of fellow travellers and Communists. The President, Jose Arevalo, is not a Communist, but is a fellow traveller. Internationally, Arevalo follows the Soviet line -- at least as far as he dares -- for he fears the strong hand of Washington. Internally, Arevalo has pursued a policy strongly hostile to American business firms in the country, particularly to the United Fruit Company. There is no reason for such hostility save a deliberate class-warfare policy. The Company for years has followed a policy of strict non-intervention in politics; it pays the highest wages in the country and has devoted much money to welfare services for employees. The United Fruit workers have had no cause for complaint. But the Government, by putting pressure on the fruit workers' union, caused a shutdown of two months during the past year. In this Arevalo overplayed his hand, for the shutdown caused grave trouble to the country's economy, and Conservative parties have made a comeback. The Army which helped Arevalo to power in 1944, now has turned against him and is strongly pro-U.S.A.

Several lessons may be drawn from the Guatemalan situation. First, no matter how well workers are paid and treated, they will be forced to strike if Communist pressure is sufficiently powerful. This discredits the theory, so often propounded by "liberals", that Communists need not be feared if working-class grievances are removed. Secondly, a pro-Communist Government inevitably causes trouble with neighboring non-Communist governments. At present, Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras have no diplomatic relations with Guatemala. This inter-American bickering will go on so long as the Kremlin has fifth columns in various countries.

Book Events

Goethe: Wisdom and Experience. Selections by Ludwig Curtius; translated by H. J. Weigand. New York: Pantheon Books, Inc. \$3.75. Reviewed by J. M. Lalley.

This collection of aphorisms and sententious observations from the prose writings of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, arranged by Herr Curtius under various general headings such as Religion, Nature, Art, Science, Morality, and so on, makes its appearance on the two hundredth anniversary of the sage's birth, which is to be celebrated in various observances here and abroad. Yet it seems to me that Goethe's fame and grandeur have suffered a severe depreciation since the first decade of the present century, when his place with Homer, Dante and Shakespeare among the great and universal gods of literature was still generally acknowledged. Now we recognize that the habitation of his genius is much father down than theirs upon the slopes of Parnassus. Something of this re-estimate is doubtless due to the disrepute into which German Kultur has been brought by the excesses of the German National State; certainly his influence here has been weakened by the decline of the German language in favor of French and Spanish in American schools. Goethe, however, was never a conscious or willing apostle of nationalism; he was, like so many Germans of his time, a fervent and nostalgic admirer of the Mediterranean civilization, of the genial world of lemon blossoms and myrtles and antique monuments. He thought himself primarily a European, and he watched the movement toward German unification with misgiving and hostility. For all these reasons he is invariably exculpated by those who seek to trace some connection between German philosophy and literature and German politics, who are fond of perceiving in Nietzsche, Bismarck, Spengler, Hitler and Stefan George, the spiritual children of Winckelmann, Lessing, Hegel, Fichte and Schelling. But I suspect that the main reason for the devaluation of Goethe is that we can now recognize him as pre-eminently the prisoner of his age, unable to transcend its cosmological horizons. He is, like his creature, Faust, an avatar of the modern man, who, as someone has said, has become an anachronism in our post-modern world.

In Goethe perhaps was most fully realized the Cartesian hero who takes the whole of knowledge for his province. Such an ambition, though more difficult in his day than in that of Descartes, was nevertheless still possible. To Goethe knowledge meant whatever could be experienced through the sense; the value of art, philosophy and religion was that they made it possible to enlarge and to intensify experience. In this sense he is the prophet of the late Nineteenth Century aestheticism. "The purpose of life", he asserted, "is life itself." This view followed from his private religious vision, which was a kind of pantheism, implicit in the Cartesian universe, but derived by Goethe from Spinoza and Leibniz. His favorite philosophical concept was entelechy, which he appears to have identified with the creative process of the imagination. He envisaged the poet and the thinker as Leibnizian monads able to realize themselves, by the action of will and imagination, in progressively higher material forms imposed upon the chaotic flux of an infinite universe. The secret of immortality is in living most completely according to the plan prescribed by a beneficent nature, which may be interpreted as an application of the principle of laissez faire to the realm of Spirit.

He shared, in short, all the bright and buoyant optimism that his contemporaries derived from their marvelously-fashioned mechanical universe and from their cult of progress. This is why Goethe, for all his adoration of the Greeks, was incapable of writing a classical tragedy; for Faust is by definition a comedy, since its ending is a happy one. But what identifies it most intimately with the age of progress is the figure of Mephistopheles: for the relegation of evil to the level of farce is, in effect, a denial of its power.

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